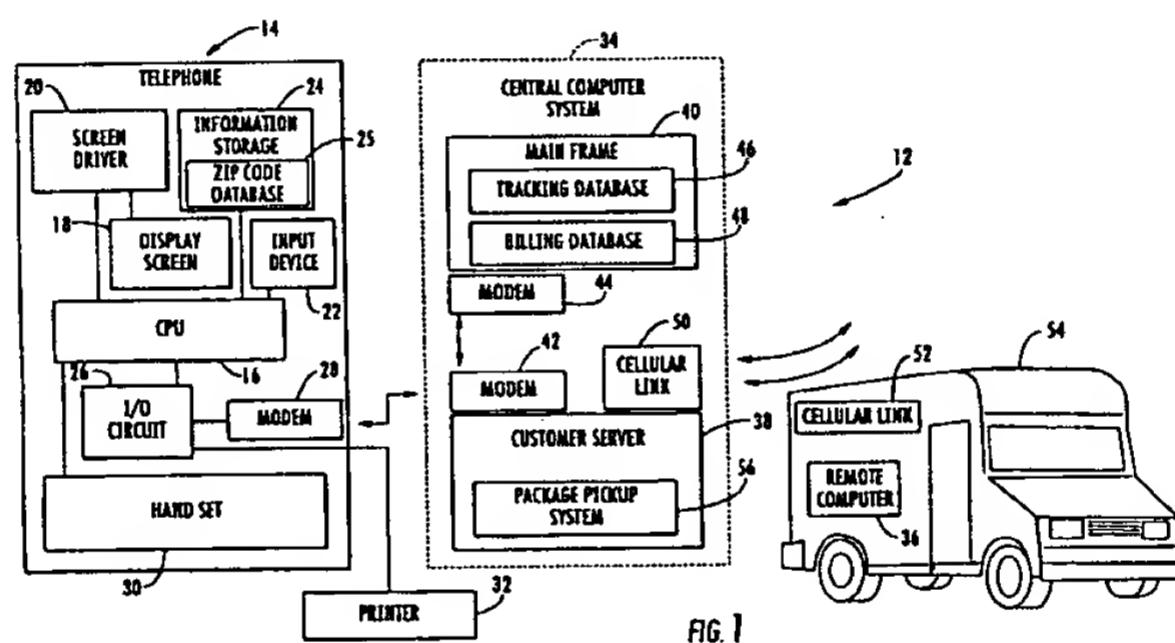


REMARKS

Pursuant to the above-noted Office Action, claims 1 and 3 through 7 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) given Kadaba (U.S. Patent No. 6,889,194) ("Kadaba"). The applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Prior to discussing the merits of the Examiner's position, the applicants believe it would be helpful to first briefly describe and characterize the Kadaba reference.

Kadaba describes a system and method of facilitating the preparation of an electronic shipping record for a parcel. Kadaba's FIG. 1 (reproduced below) provides a useful view of this system.



Kadaba provides a central computer (34) that includes a tracking database (46) and a billing database (48). This central computer can communicate with remote computers (36) that are provided on board parcel delivery vehicles (54). Such communications are supported by a cellular link (52). Kadaba also provides a plurality of so-called intelligent telephones (14) that also connect to the central computer using a bearer connection of choice. This permits, Kadaba suggests, having the central computer download a parcel shipping procedure (such as a form and corresponding process) to the intelligent telephones.

Kadaba then teaches that a party wishing to ship a parcel can access available shipping services via the intelligent telephone (for example, these service opportunities can be displayed, menu-style, on a corresponding display screen (18)). This user can interact with the intelligent telephone to complete, for example, a shipping request. The intelligent telephone then interacts with a locally available printer (32) to print a shipping label that the user can affix to their parcel. Following this activity, the intelligent telephone then transmits the corresponding shipping record to the central computer to indicate that the parcel is ready for shipment and to update the tracking database. The billing database may be updated at this same time.

The central computer can then contact the remote computer in the delivery vehicle to inform the driver that this particular parcel is available to be picked up from the user. Kadaba also suggests that the user can use the intelligent telephone to access the central computer's tracking database to facilitate tracking of the shipping process for this parcel. This user can similarly access the billing database via the intelligent telephone.

Kadaba is silent with respect to further details regarding these tracking and billing databases. In particular, Kadaba makes no mention of whether these (or any other disclosed) databases are relational databases. Claim 1, however, specifically requires that the hub server comprise a relational database.

Perhaps more significantly, although Kadaba teaches providing newly entered information from the intelligent telephones to the central computer in order to update the latter's databases, Kadaba makes no teaching or suggestion that these intelligent telephones actually retain the shipping information that the user creates using the intelligent telephones.

Although these devices do appear to store some general information (such as addresses and the like), the shipping records themselves do not appear to be stored at the intelligent telephones. Instead, Kadaba provides for first printing a hardcopy of the completed shipping label and then transmitting the shipping information to the central computer where the information is actually stored for the entire system. Although the intelligent telephone can again access this shipping information by accessing the central computer, the intelligent telephone does not appear to retain its own copy. Accordingly, Kadaba makes no teachings with respect to "synchronizing" information as between two

points as the information at one of the points quickly disappears once the exchange has occurred.

Claim 1, however, specifically provides for not only sending changes from the network nodes to a hub server but also for sending changes from the hub server to the network nodes in order to effect network-wide synchronization of the shipping information. Not only does Kadaba fail to teach “synchronization” but this reference also fails to suggest “network-wide” synchronization. Instead, Kadaba only provides for the transmission of newly entered information from one intelligent telephone to the central computer. No suggestion is made that the central computer act to synchronize any other intelligent telephone with respect to this newly entered information and hence Kadaba’s network is utterly without network-wide synchronization.

The applicant would like to note yet one other significant point of distinction with respect to Kadaba and claim 1. Kadaba discloses that a cellular telephone network can comprise the bearer mechanism that connects his vehicle-mounted remote computers to his central computer. Such cellular telephone networks are well understood in the art to comprise wide area networks (often referred to by the acronym “WAN”). Claim 1, however, provides for a “local area network” that is at least partially “wireless” and that couples the network nodes to client devices to thereby provide an interface to the shipping data. A local area network (often referred to by the acronym “LAN”) is not a wide area network such as a cellular network as the former is, by definition, “local” and not “wide area.” Hence, Kadaba fails to teach or suggest the use of a local area network for any purpose whatsoever.

One may also observe that, to the extent that Kadaba does provide a communication link to his remote computers, it is not to permit the latter to obtain shipping information from the intelligent telephones. Instead, Kadaba’s remote computers are communicating with the central computer. Claim 1 can and does specify coupling the aforementioned network nodes to the client computing devices via a local area network in order to provide an interface to the shipping data because claim 1 also specifies that the hub server facilitates network-wide synchronization with respect to the network nodes and hence these network nodes, in fact, possess the shipping information that the client computing devices might be seeking. Kadaba’s teachings are also therefore distinguished from claim 1 in this regard as well.

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With all due respect, any one of the above-noted points of difference between claim 1 and Kadaba is sufficient to traverse a rejection based upon anticipation. The applicant therefore respectfully submits that claim 1 is readily distinguished from Kadaba and may be passed to allowance.

Claim 3 is a dependent claim and provides additional information regarding the synchronization of data and in particular specifies provision of a master relation data synchronizer that synchronizes data as is stored in both the relational database and as is stored at the network nodes. As already noted above, Kadaba makes no such provision.

Claims 5 and 6 present a database replication means for scheduling large bursts of data transmission and, in claim 6, scheduling at least some of these large bursts of data transmission to coincide with specific network communication resource availability. Kadaba makes no teachings with respect to the functions set forth in these claims and hence cannot be said to anticipate their subject matter.

Claim 7 provides details with respect to having at least some of the network nodes comprise a proxy server for the hub server. Neither Kadaba's intelligent telephones or his remote computers are properly viewable as a proxy server for the central computer of his system. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of claim 7 is also independently allowable with respect to Kadaba.

There being no other objections to or rejections of the claims, the applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 3 through 7 may be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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